

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 TRSE-00 EB-07 ACDA-07 AID-05 EPG-02

STR-04 OMB-01 CEA-01 CU-02 /087 W

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R 191745Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7626

INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PFOR, FI, UR

SUBJECT: KEKKONEN'S OFFICIAL VISIT TO SOVIET UNION- MAY 17-24

REF: (A) MOSCOW 6804, (B) HELSINKI 997

SUMMARY: THE SOVIETS HAVE ROLLED OUT THE RED CARPET FOR FINNISH PRESIDENT KEKKONEN. PODGORNYY LED A LARGE TURNOUT AT THE AIRPORT ARRIVAL CEREMONIES MAY 17 FOLLOWED BY A MEETING ("IN A FRIENDLY ATMOSPHERE AND A SPIRIT OF MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING") AND OFFICIAL DINNER BOTH HOSTED BY BREZHNEV. THE SIGNING OF THE ECONOMIC COOPERATION AGREEMENTS AND AND A KEKKONEN-PODGORNYY LUNCHEON HIGHLIGHTED THE SECOND DAY. MEDIA COVERAGE HAS BEEN EXTENSIVE. BOTH SIDES APPEAR TO BE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ACCENTING THE POSITIVE, PARTICULARLY THE ECONOMIC COOPERATION AGREEMENTS AND THE FUNDAMENTAL VALUE OF THE 1948 TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP. ALL OF THIS REFLECTS THE BASICALLY GOOD RELATIONS WHICH EXIST BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES AND HAS MADE POSSIBLE WHAT KEKKONEN TOLD THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR WAS "A GOOD VISIT." END SUMMARY.

1. FINNISH PRESIDENT KEKKONEN LEFT MOSCOW MORNING MAY 19 HAVING COMPLETED TWO DAYS OF HIS PROJECTED EIGHT DAY VISIT TO THE SOVIET UNION (REF B). SOVIETS HAVE MADE THE OFFICIAL VISIT AN OCCASION FOR REAFFIRMING PUBLICALLY THAT FINNISH-SOVIET RELATIONS ARE IN EXCELLENT SHAPE AND THAT THEY ARE "CONFIDENT" AS BREZHNEV SAID IN HIS MAY 17 DINNER TOAST, THAT "GOOD-NEIGHBORLINESS AND COOPERATION" WILL CONTINUE.

2. SOVIET STATEMENTS HAVE STRESSED THAT 1948 TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP, COOPERATION AND MUTUAL ASSISTANCE IS THE FOUNDATION FOR THE RELATIONSHIP AND THAT LONG-TERM ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION AGREEMENTS ARE THE BEST EVIDENCE THAT THERE IS "A NEW POLITICAL CLIMATE IN RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE TWO STATES" (BREZHNEV TOAST) WHICH CAN SERVE AS A MODEL FOR THE REST OF EUROPE ON HOW STATES WITH DIFFERENT SOCIAL SYSTEMS CAN COOPERATE. KEKKONEN ECHOED THESE SENTIMENTS IN HIS TOAST IN REPLY, BUT WITH SOMEWHAT LESS EMPHASIS ON THE ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND SOMEWHAT MORE ON THE INTERNATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RELATIONSHIP AND OF FINLAND'S ROLE IN EUROPE.

3. BREZHNEV AVOIDED MENTION OF FINNISH NEUTRALITY IN HIS MAY 17 DINNER REMARKS AND INSTEAD CHOSE TO COMMENT ON NATO ACTIVITY IN THE NORDIC AREA. HE ASSERTED THAT ALTHOUGH THE SITUATION IN THE AREA IS QUIET AND STABLE, "ONE MUST NOT SHUT ONE'S EYES" LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TO NATO ACTIVITY THERE. HE POINTEDLY REMARKED THAT "THE PARTICIPATION (IN NATO) OF VARIOUS SCANDINAVIAN COUNTRIES IS NOTED HERE ALSO" AND CLAIMED THAT SECURITY WOULD NOT BE FOUND "IN THE ACTIVATION OF THE POLICY OF BLOCS." (THE TASS ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE MAY 17 MEETING ALSO INDICATED THAT BALTIC SEA ISSUES WERE DISCUSSED BY BREZHNEV AND KEKKONEN.) KEKKONEN, IN CONTRAST, REFERRED SPECIFICALLY TO FINLAND'S "PEACEFUL AND NEUTRAL POLICY" IN HIS TOAST WITH THE NOTE THAT ITS PRACTICAL REALIZATION WAS BASED ON THE "DURABILITY OF RELATIONS BETWEEN FINLAND AND THE SOVIET UNION." HIS PRAISE OF THE 1948 TREATY WAS ALSO LESS EFFUSIVE THAN BREZHNEV'S. THE LATTER REFERRED TO THE "STABLE AND DURABLE REALITY" OF SOVIET-FINNISH RELATIONS AS BEING "BRILLIANTLY EMBODIED IN THE TREATY." WHEREAS KEKKONEN CALLED IT "THE BEST POSSIBLE THING BECAUSE IT HAS NO ACCEPTABLE OR PRACTICAL ALTERNATIVE." BOTH WERE IN AGREEMENT, HOWEVER, THAT IT FORMED THE

FOUNDATION OF THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO.

4. THE FINNISH-HOSTED LUNCHEON ON MAY 18 WAS LESS FULLY COVERED BY THE PRESS. PODGORNÝ AND KEKKONEN'S TOASTS, AS SUMMARIZED IN PRAVDA MAY 19, STRESSED THE ECONOMIC SIDE OF THE RELATIONSHIP AS EMBODIED IN THE AGREEMENTS SIGNED (SEE REFTEL A FOR DETAILS). PODGORNÝ RECALLED THE TREATY OF 1948 WITHOUT MENTIONING NEUTRALITY, WHILE KEKKONEN APPARENTLY DID NOT MENTION EITHER NEUTRALITY OR THE TREATY.

5. BOTH SIDES INVOKED CSCE AND THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT, BUT WITH DECIDEDLY DIFFERENT EMPHASIS. BREZHNEV IN HIS DINNER TOAST DEVOTED A SUBSTANTIAL PORTION OF HIS COMMENTS ON INTERNATIONAL QUESTIONS TO THE GENEVA TALKS AND SALT. HIS NOD IN THE DIRECTION OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CSCE CAME IN HIS ASSERTION THAT THE FINNISH-SOVIET ECONOMIC AGREEMENTS CONSTITUTED FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION

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R 191745Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
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INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
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OF THE FINAL ACT AND WERE UNIQUE EXAMPLES OF LONG-TERM COOPERATION BETWEEN STATES OF DIFFERENT SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SYSTEMS. IN REPLYING, KEKKONEN ADDRESSED HIMSELF SPECIFICALLY TO THE INCOMPLETE "REALIZATION" OF THE FINAL ACT AND TO BELGRADE WHICH, HE STATED, WOULD "EVALUATE THE ACHIEVED RESULTS AND MAP COOPERATION TRENDS FOR THE FUTURE." HE BALANCED THIS, HOWEVER, BY URGING THAT BELGRADE BE CONDUCTED IN THE SAME SPIRIT THAT THE FINAL ACT WAS SIGNED AND THAT IT ASSIST, NOT HAMPER, CONTINUED COOPERATION.

6. IN BRIEF COMMENTS TO THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR AT A KREMLIN RECEPTION FOR CHIEFS OF DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS, KEKKONEN REMARKED THAT IT WAS "A GOOD VISIT." FINNISH EMBOFF HAS TOLD US OVER THE PHONE THAT THE VISIT
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WENT OFF WITHOUT A HITCH, THAT THE COMMUNIQUE HAS BEEN FULLY NEGOTIATED WITH MINIMUM DIFFICULTY, AND THAT IT, IN FACT, WAS VIRTUALLY COMPLETED BEFORE KEKKONEN SET FOOT ON SOVIET SOIL.

7. COMMENT: JUDGING FROM THE PUBLIC DISPLAY, BOTH SIDES WERE DETERMINED TO MAKE THIS VISIT A MODEL OF ITS KIND AND A KEYSTONE FOR THE COMMON 60TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS THIS YEAR (FINLAND OF ITS INDEPENDENCE AND THE SOVIET UNION OF ITS REVOLUTION). THE ECONOMIC AGREEMENTS CHOSEN TO CAP THE VISIT WERE CAREFULLY WORKED OUT IN ADVANCE (REF B) AND EVEN THE COMMUNIQUE WAS ESSENTIALLY WRAPPED UP BEFORE THE VISIT STARTED SO THAT NO SURPRISES WOULD INTERVENE. THE STAGE MANAGEMENT WAS FLAWLESS AND THE ACTORS PLAYED THEIR PARTS IN THE PRESCRIBED MANNER.

8. OF COURSE ALL OF THIS WAS POSSIBLE ONLY BECAUSE FINNISH-SOVIET RELATIONS ARE BASICALLY AS GOOD AS BOTH KEKKONEN AND BREZHNEV SAY THEY ARE AND BECAUSE THE TWO NEIGHBORS -- THE FINNS ABOVE ALL -- HAVE WORKED HARD AT KEEPING THEM IN GOOD REPAIR. ALL THAT REMAINS NOW IS FOR THE COMMUNIQUE TO PUT THE FINAL STAMP ON THE AFFAIR. THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THE COMMUNIQUE WILL CONTAIN A REFERENCE TO FINNISH NEUTRALITY HAS APPARENTLY BEEN SETTLED AND WE HOPE TO FIND THIS OUT IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS. MEANWHILE, BREZHNEV'S

COMMENTS ON NATO PRESENCE IN NORTHERN EUROPE AND THE
APPARENT DISCUSSION OF THE BALTIC COULD BE
SIGNALS OF SOVIET CONCERN WHICH MIGHT BE USED AS AN
EXCUSE FOR NOT SAYING ANYTHING ON THE MATTER IN
THE COMMUNIQUE. HOWEVER, THIS "ISSUE" IS STILL
LARGELY ONE FOR THE FUTURE SINCCCE THE BASIC LINES OF THE
FOREIGN POLICY KEKKONEN IS FOLLOWING ARE KNOWN
AND ENDORSED BY THE SOVIETS. MATLOCK
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